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RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 6149
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3363
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3580
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5291
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5992
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0615
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)
SUBJECT: EVO BEATS CONSPIRACY/WAR DRUMS

Classified By: A/DCM Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: President Evo Morales is taking conspiracy charges to new levels of absurdity. Morales said March 2 that the United States uses its South American counter-narcotics efforts as a smokescreen for military intervention and political meddling. Morales linked a perceived upturn in an alleged U.S. conspiracy against his government with a desire to sabotage prospects for a new constitution that would include banning foreign (read U.S.) military bases. Charges of U.S. conspiracy have become a standard talking point in the government's public engagements, although Foreign Minister Choquehuanca expressly exempted us from charges that other diplomats met with opposition leaders last week. The allegation that diplomats cannot meet with members of the opposition without risking charges of "conspiracy" is troubling. End Summary.

Evo: Drug War Excuse for South American Invasion

¶2. (U) Bolivian President Evo Morales alleged March 2 that the U.S. is using its counter-narcotics efforts in South America for political purposes and as a pretext for "military intervention." Morales asserted the professed U.S. concerns about drug-related crime or health issues are not genuine and used as an excuse to engage in political meddling. He argued the U.S. similarly used concerns about anti-terrorism and weapons of mass destruction as an excuse to invade Iraq, when the real reason was control of Iraq's oil supplies. Morales once again denounced an alleged U.S. conspiracy against his administration led by Ambassador Goldberg.

Paranoia Spreads as Opposition Briefs EU, Others

¶3. (U) In separate comments, Foreign Minister Choquehuanca lamented that the EU and their diplomats met with opposition congressmen, most notably Senate President Oscar Ortiz (PODEMOS-Santa Cruz). The Foreign Minister accused the opposition party PODEMOS of trying to "isolate and overthrow" the Morales administration. Choquehuanca announced an "informative" meeting with the diplomatic corps March 3 to discuss the issue. These latest comments are consistent with

President Morales' frequently expressed concern that some countries' diplomatic missions are "practicing politics" instead of diplomacy, indicating the proper role of a diplomat should be confined to improving commercial relations and to promoting positive ties with the government.

Sherlock Evo Connects Conspiracy with Bases

¶4. (U) President Morales postulated a direct cause and effect relationship between a proposed ban on foreign military bases in the draft constitution and a supposed increase in alleged U.S. conspiracy against his administration. "Why does the U.S. Embassy mobilize so much against the government, against the new constitution? Comrades, it is the first time a constitution expressly defines that no country can have a military base in Bolivia, especially not the United States." Morales added February 29 that the United States establishes military bases because it wants to control Bolivia both politically and militarily.

¶5. (C) Although Morales has repeatedly railed against permitting foreign (read U.S.) military bases in Bolivia during his two years in office, there are no U.S. military bases in Bolivia. We suspect he is confusing our DEA facilities in Chimore (Cochabamba Department) with a "base." Morales seemed to imply as much when he added "there are still DEA agent infiltrators in Chimore," noting he had photographs to prove it. Morales also harkened back to his days as a coca union organizer, when the Bolivian military had to "submit" to orders from DEA agents to "repress us." He may mistakenly believe Bolivian units working "with" our NAS and DEA offices based in Chimore (at the pleasure of the Bolivian government per long-standing bilateral agreements) are instead working "for" them.

Comment

¶6. (C) The Morales Administration remains incredibly sensitive to the international community meeting with opposition forces. The Foreign Minister voiced his displeasure publicly and in calling in the Diplomatic Corps March 3 hopes to discourage such contacts (septel).
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